## actlaw society

### Mindfulness for Busy Minds

PRESENTED BY MEGAN LAYTON, SIMPLY MINDFUL

2024 FAMILY LAW CONFERENCE | 21 AUGUST

# MINDFULNESS for busy minds



#### Welcome

'You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf'

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

#### How mindfulness can help you take charge of your life

- What mindfulness is and how it works
- Mindfulness, mental health, neuroplasticity, stress
- Mindfulness practices to try
- Diving deeper with mindfulness the 8 week MBSR
- Getting started



CANBERRA MINDFULNESS CENTRE



#### Mindfulness since 2004

- Mindfulness, Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
  - Retreats
  - Mindfulness for organisations
    - Mindful Yoga
  - Positive Neuroplasticity Training
    - Self-compassion
    - Special events

#### Megan Layton

Director & Mental Health Social Worker

#### Simply Mindful team

Antonia, Lesley, Jeannette, Paul, Jennifer

#### How this works

- Do what's right for you self-care
- No way to pass or fail
- See for yourself openness, curiosity
- Everything can be adapted to suit you
- Questions, feedback welcome no dumb questions
- Mindfulness is an innate human capacity
- Need support? Mindfulness works AND it can be challenging



Image: Henck van Bilsen, see: socksofdoom.com

## Mindfulness: sustained present moment awareness

'making what you're doing now the most important thing'

with a non-judgemental, kind, curiosity

Why?

this is the only
moment in which we
can act, create,
problem solve,
influence, learn,
change...

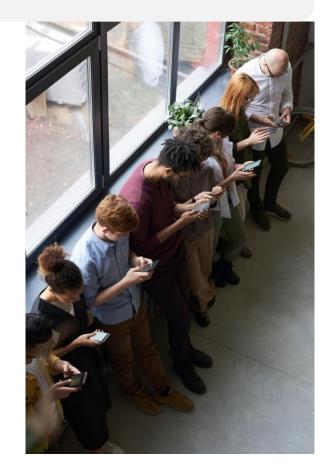
## Why mindfulness?

We spend 50-70% of our time in the past or future

PAST
remembering
regretting
rehashing
reviewing

PRESENT
responding
resources
problem solving
creating

FUTURE
anticipating
worrying
planning
imagining



## Attention & Neuroplasticity neural 'sheep tracks'



### Why mindfulness? Attention

Wherever our attention goes, our time, energy, money and other resources go with it.

#### **NEUROPLASTICITY**

'whatever we pay attention to grows'



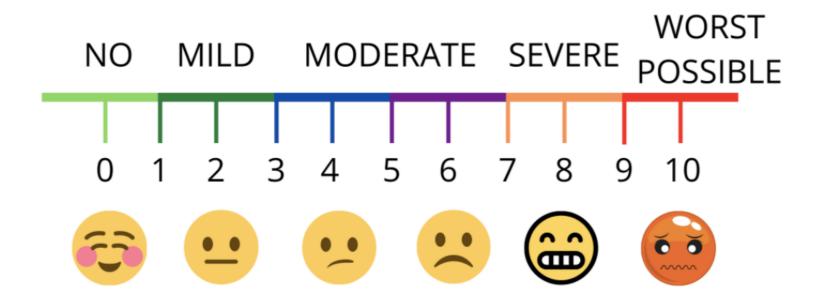


## A minute of mindfulness

#### Check in

#### Your level of stress or distress 0 - 10 in this moment

- Sensations
- Emotions
- Thoughts
- Behaviours & impulses



## Mindfulness = mental training

#### **Attention**

#### **Awareness**

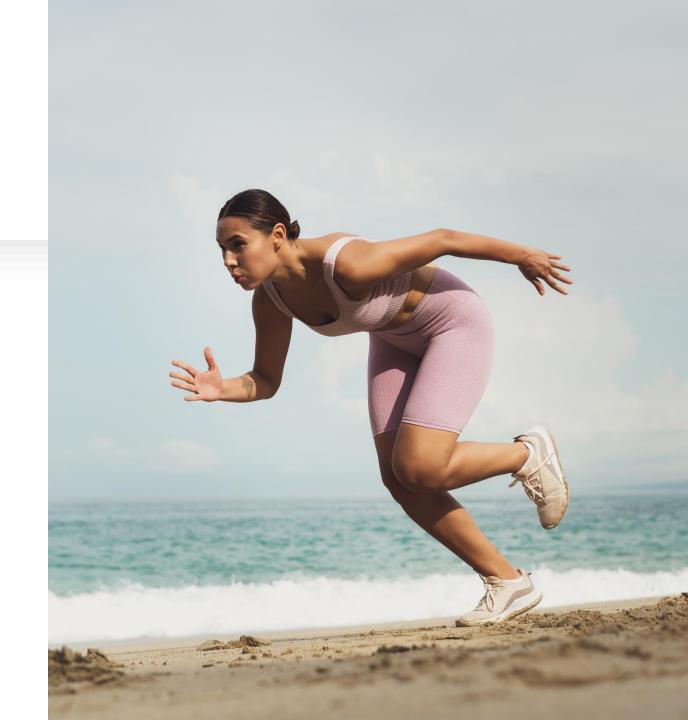
curious

non-judgmental

kind

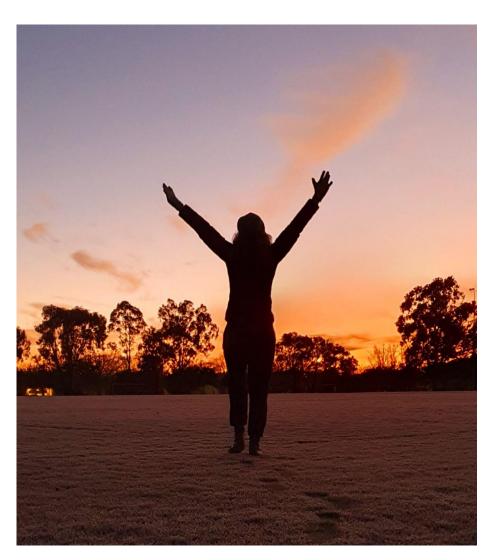
#### **Action**

With training (practice) we build the 'mindful muscle'



### Grounding practice - sensations

- Present moment awareness sensations
- Body sensations always in the present
- Mindful movement to 'get into your body' and 'out of your head'
- any movement or exercise can be mindful
- Increases sensory fulfillment, joy
- Increases self-awareness





mindfulness practice

## Interrupting High Stress or Distress

#### Try

• Intense tensing and releasing – let's try it now

#### Other options:

- Intense exercise
- Cold water
- Talking with a calm, safe trusted person



TIP: Do this for a few minutes every day for 2 weeks and you will start to remember it when you need it

### Intense tensing and releasing

#### 3 stages

- 1. Press through your feet as hard as you can for as long as you can
  - Release in the most graduated way possible, being really curious about all the changes taking place in the lower body
- 2. Repeat with upper body press the palms together
- 3. Repeat with whole body
- Check in & notice any changes



See, hear, feel practic e



#### Your nervous system

- 1. Parasympathetic Nervous System
- (PNS first to evolve) = brake
- Freeze: Immobilisation, energy conservation
- 2. Sympathetic Nervous System
- (SNS) = accelerator
- Activation, flight/flight: Drive or Threat
- 3. Parasympathetic most recently evolved
- Safe, Calm: Rest, heal, digest

## Want more mindfulness?

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
   Thursdays from 24 October 8 weeks +
   Retreat
- Mindful yoga Wednesdays 6pm
- Self-compassion starts 15<sup>th</sup> October 6 weeks Tuesday evenings
- Positive Neuroplasticity Training (PNT) 6 weeks
- Retreats, practice groups, special events



#### Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction

World's gold standard mindfulness training



8 weeks+ 1 Sunday retreat

October
Thursdays
6.15pm



## Mindful yoga

Wednesdays 6pm online and in person in Dickson

New and experienced yogis welcome

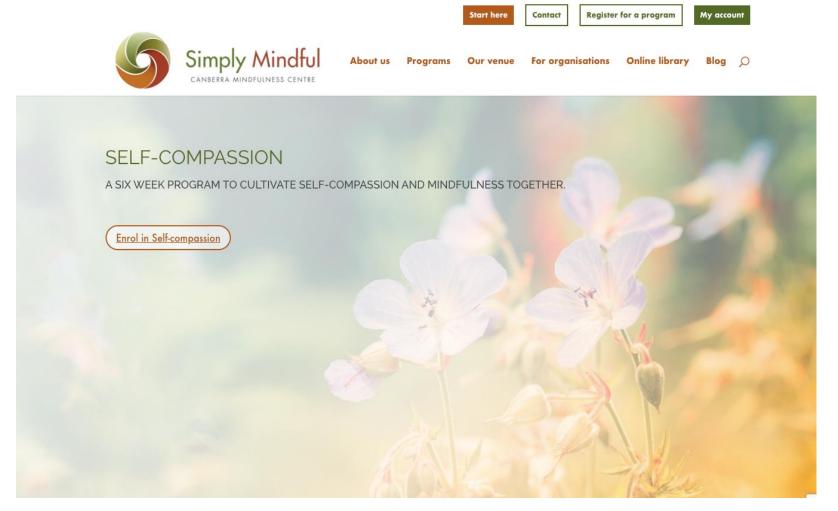
Trauma sensitive



## Self-compassion

Cultivate a warm connected presence with yourself.

6 weeks, Tuesdays
6pm
Starts 1 5 October
Mindfulness and selfcompassion together are a
powerful combination for
managing difficult emotions
and when dealing with the
pressures and strains of life.



### Positive Neuroplasticity Training

Hardwire peace of mind, contentment and self-compassion into your brain.

6 weeks Feb 2025



#### Does it work?

'This course was outstanding and totally exceeded my expectations. I felt supported, held, valued, cared for. It was all very valuable...

I enjoyed learning the science behind mindfulness as it explained so much of why I think and feel the way I do.'

Mel Wise, MBSR 2022

#### Does it work?

'This course has changed my life.

I have rediscovered old techniques and learnt new ones to deal with the challenges of life.

I feel like I can find peace and calm whatever the challenge is now.'

2022 MBSR participant

#### Does it work?

'It's been the best adult learning experience I've ever had and I've participated in, or led, many. Clear, warm, wise...

I hope many more people have the opportunity to do this'

August 2023 MBSR participant

## on good days...

- Mindfulness has a recharge function, it builds internal resources and builds self-awareness
- Cumulative, preventative

#### on bad days...

- Mindfulness has a survival and coping function
- Helps us get through, take one moment at a time, interrupt stress, prevent it from escalating and reduce negative rumination

### Thanks & recap

- Mindfulness, building the 'mental muscle'
- Ways of interrupting stress
  - a minute of mindfulness: breath, body sensations
  - Intense tensing and releasing
  - See, hear, feel
- Your nervous system
- Efficacy, self-care



#### **Invitation:** getting started

Practice one of these exercises for a few minutes daily for the next week, so it start becomes a habit

#### Interested in more mindfulness?

- Apps:
  - Smiling Mind
  - Insight Timer
  - 10% Happier (app & podcast)
  - Headspace
  - Calm
- Netflix 'Headspace' series
- Foriade on Demand Episode 6



#### Episode 6 Living Mindfully

Join Dan Bouchier and Megan Layton and learn how to cultivate inner resources to help you live well and more mindfully.

Episode released 12 October 2021.

## 'Allostatic load' stress and mental health

 Wear and tear on the body which accumulates as an individual is exposed to repeated or chronic stress

'The cost of chronic exposure to elevated or fluctuating endocrine or neural responses resulting from stress'

 Mindfulness helps us learn self-regulation and healthy coping strategies

